



## Introduction to Family Activity Guides For Early Childhood Educators

### Background Information

The Family Activity Guides were developed to supplement the Keystone Color Me Healthy materials. Since families have the greatest impact on children and the choices they make, we felt it was important to develop fun, interactive, and educational family-related activities to help children make healthy choices. Keystone Color Me Healthy is one component of the Keystone Kids Go! initiative. To learn more about Keystone Kids Go! visit <http://panen.org/keystone-kids-go>.

### Guide Components

The Family Activity Guides are seasonally-based and address nutrition and physical activity choices related to each season. In each guide, you will find: *Munch*, *The Funny Bone*, *Words...Words...Words*, *Fun Facts*, *Move*, and a *Reflections sheet*.

- *Munch* investigates a seasonal food and information related to it in conjunction with a sampling session.
- *The Funny Bone* shares a fun joke related to the featured food.
- *Words...Words...Words* features some words for parents to introduce to their child.
- *Fun Facts* addresses interesting facts about the featured food.
- *Move* encourages families to step away from the TV, computer, and video games, use their thinking skills and increase movement.
- The *Reflections sheet* gives families an opportunity to share about their experience, including what they liked and what they would change. The sheet also serves as documentation for programs who record parent and child activity hours.

### Tips for Sharing with Families

Please read over each guide and become familiar with its contents before sharing with families. The following is what we consider to be important information to discuss with them.

- *Munch*: Reiterate how important it is to wash (and rub with your hands) all fruits and vegetables in cold water (no soap) before consuming, even if they say prewashed. Fruits and vegetables have been well handled and may have bacteria (salmonella, e coli, etc.), pesticides, herbicides, and dirt on them. It is also important to wash fruits and vegetables that you will be removing the skin from (orange, banana, potato, etc.). It is best to wash right before preparing and not ahead of time.
- *The Funny Bone*: The jokes may appear to be above the understanding of some children. This should not discourage parents from sharing them. Children in the preschool years are learning about jokes and even if they do not totally understand, they are learning valuable information about how jokes work. Jokes help boost language development (increase vocabulary), promote thinking skills, and foster social skill development. Through jokes, children learn that words can

have more than one meaning, words can be played with and jokes usually have two parts and involve two or more people. Children will practice telling jokes which may seem like nonsense, but we should laugh anyway.

- *Words... Words... Words:* These words may seem a little “advanced” for children, but keep in mind that we are not expecting them to start using them (although they might 😊). To help children become good readers and understand and remember what they have read, it is very important that they know as many words as possible. As families do the activities they should try to incorporate the words, and when appropriate, talk about what they mean. By doing this, parents can help increase their child’s vocabulary.
- *Move:* The activity may not be able to be done exactly as mentioned. Families are encouraged to make any changes to best suit their needs and abilities.

### **Using the Family Activity Guides**

The Family Activity Guides align wonderfully with the Keystone Color Me Healthy materials. If you participated in a Keystone Color Me Healthy professional development opportunity, you will have those materials on hand. If not, visit the Keystone Kids Go! website at <http://panen.org/keystone-kids-go> and click on “Go Colorful” to find out more about professional development opportunities.

The following are examples of how you can incorporate the Family Activity Guides in your program. Remember that you do not need to limit yourself to the ideas mentioned. Be creative and modify to best suit the needs of the families you are working with.

- *Family Fun Night:* Activities can be sampled at a family fun night. Families will be inspired to take the guides home and do more activities.
- *Parent Workshop:* The guides can be the focus of a parent workshop. This would give parents an opportunity to try the activities out and plan for implementation at home. If you have internet access, you may consider having parents look up the Keystone Kids Go! website or some of the other internet resources mentioned in this handout.
- *Home Visit:* The guides could be featured on a home visit.

**Note...**For programs that document parent and child interactions, the Reflections sheet will be helpful.

### **Additional Resources**

These materials can be used with other Color Me Healthy parent newsletters and nutrition and physical activity resources available at: <http://www.colormehealthy.com/index.html>.

Nibbles for Health was developed for child care center staff and parents of young children enrolled in child care centers. Nibbles has been updated and the CD offers child care center staff guidance on conducting discussions with parents in four sharing sessions. It also has 40 reproducible parent newsletters that address many of the challenges they face. Materials can be downloaded or ordered from the USDA website at: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/Resources/nibbles.html>.

Find more resources for families by clicking on the “Go Families” component of the Keystone Kids Go! website at <http://panen.org/keystone-kids-go>.



## Introduction to Family Activity Guides For Parents

### What are the Family Activity Guides?

You are the most important teacher in your child's life. These Family Activity Guides were created as part of the Keystone Color Me Healthy project to give you fun learning activities to do with your children that will teach them about healthy choices.

There are four Family Activity Guides: one for winter, spring, summer, and fall. Each guide talks about nutrition and activities you can do related to that time of year.

### What will you find in the Family Activity Guides?

In each guide, you will find: *Munch*, *The Funny Bone*, *Words...Words...Words*, *Fun Facts*, *Move*, and a *Reflections sheet*.

- *Munch* looks at a seasonal food. You will also find an activity to do with the featured food.
- *The Funny Bone* shares a fun joke about the featured food.
- *Words...Words...Words* gives some words for you to use when talking to your child.
- *Fun Facts* gives interesting facts about the featured food.
- *Move* encourages your family to step away from the TV, computer, and video games, use their thinking skills, and move.
- The *Reflections sheet* gives you an opportunity to share about your experience. What did you like? What would you change?

### Things to think about...

- *Munch*: It is important to wash all fruits and vegetables before eating them, even if they say "prewashed." Use cold water. Rub with your hands. Do not use soap. Fruits and vegetables have been touched by many hands. They may have bacteria, dirt and chemicals on them. Even wash fruits and vegetables that you will be removing the skin from (orange, banana, potato, etc.). It is best to wash them right before eating them.
- *The Funny Bone*: Your child may not understand the joke at first. Read them anyway! Young children are learning about jokes even if they do not really understand them. They are learning about how jokes work. Jokes help children learn new words and encourage thinking skills. Jokes help children be "social." They also teach children that words can have more than one meaning and you can "play" with words. Children learn that jokes usually have two parts and involve two or more people. They will practice telling jokes which may not make sense, but we should laugh anyway.

- *Words... Words... Words:* These words may seem “big” for your child. Keep in mind that we do not expect them to start using these words (although they might 😊). To help children become good readers, and understand and remember what they have read, it is very important that they know as many words as possible. As you do the activities with your children, try to use the words. When you think it is a good idea, also talk about what they mean. By doing this, you will increase your child’s vocabulary. What a wonderful thing!
- *Move:* Be creative! You do not have to do this activity exactly like the guide says. You know your child best. Change things to meet their needs and abilities.

**Websites to check out...**

Keystone Color Me Healthy is just one part of the Keystone Kids Go! initiative. If you enjoy these activities, you can access more resources for families by clicking on the “Go Families” component of the Keystone Kids Go! website at <http://panen.org/keystone-kids-go>.

# Waltz into Winter



## A Family Activity Guide

**Be on the LOOKout for...**

**Munch:** Yummy ideas and information about oranges

**Move:** Fun reasons to turn off the TV and computer and move

**Laugh:** The Funny Bone—Guaranteed to make you chuckle

**Learn:** Learn new vocabulary with Words... Words... Words

Waltz into Winter: A Family Activity Guide was developed as a supplement to the Keystone Kids Go! Keystone Color Me Healthy project.





# Munch...

- Oranges are in their *prime* in the winter months and are a great way to get Vitamin C. Vitamin C helps protect your children from colds.
- Let your child help you peel an orange. Wash the orange in cold water before beginning. You may have to get it started for them. This helps them develop their fine motor skills which help them write and color. Predict how many *segments* there are and then pull apart and count. Talk about how the orange feels, weighs, smells, and looks.

## The Funny Bone

Question: What is orange and sounds like a parrot?

Answer: A carrot

### Words... Words... Words

*Navel*: another name for belly button

*Prime*: the best

*Segments*: separate pieces

*Waltz*: a dance

For more information about fruits and vegetables,  
visit: [www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org](http://www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org)

## Fun Orange Facts

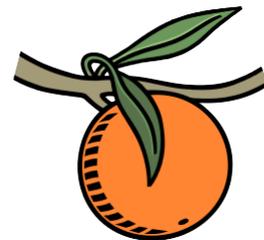
### Did you know...

An orange seed is called a "pip."

Florida grows more oranges than any other state.

*Navel* oranges got their name from the belly button-like spot on their bottom.

Christopher Columbus brought the first seeds to the Americas on his second trip in 1493.





# Move...

Chilly winter days can make it hard to get outside and play. Why not build an inside fort with your child? Not only will it keep them busy and active, it will help them use their imaginations.



## **Fort Cabin Fever**

1. Clean out an area around a couch, chair, table or bed.
2. Using pillows, sheets, blankets, etc., build a fort to hide and play in.
3. Talk to your children about what other things they might need. What could be used for a doorbell? What could a pillow be used for?
4. To work off some energy, you could jump, skip, or hop around the fort.

## **Here are some things around the house that you can add...**

- Books or magazines
- Flashlight
- Notepad and crayons
- Stuffed animals
- Healthy snacks (hmmm... what about an orange?)

# Waltz into Winter Reflections

You are the most important teacher in your child's life!



As a family, we... (circle which ones you did)

- Peeled and ate an orange
- Predicted and counted the number of segments
- Read The Funny Bone
- Talked about the Fun Orange Facts
- Built Fort Cabin Fever

Anything else? \_\_\_\_\_

Our favorite activity in this guide was... \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

The activity would have been better if... \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Family Names: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Step into Spring



## A Family Activity Guide

**Be on the LOOKout for...**

**Munch:** Yummy ideas and information about strawberries

**Move:** Fun reasons to turn off the TV and computer and move

**Laugh:** The Funny Bone—Guaranteed to make you chuckle

**Learn:** Learn new vocabulary with Words... Words... Words

Step into Spring: A Family Activity Guide was developed as a supplement to the Keystone Kids Go! Keystone Color Me Healthy project.





# Munch...

- Strawberries can be found in the grocery store in early spring, but in late spring you can find some that were grown near you. Strawberries make a great snack. They are low-fat, low-calorie, and have lots of Vitamin C.
- Have strawberries for a snack. Talk about the seeds on the outside. Wash the strawberries in cold water. Cut a strawberry in half and talk about what you see. Mix some strawberries into a bowl of vanilla yogurt for a healthy strawberry sundae.

## The Funny Bone

Question: What do you call a sad strawberry?

Answer: A "blue" berry

## Words... Words... Words

*Average*: typical, usual, or common

*Blue*: another way to say sad

*Cooped up*: confined, stuck somewhere

*Critic*: judge, reviewer

For more information about fruits and vegetables in season, visit: [http://www.papREFERRED.com/seasonal\\_calendar.aspx](http://www.papREFERRED.com/seasonal_calendar.aspx)

## Fun Strawberry Facts

### Did you know...

Strawberries are the only fruit with seeds on the outside.

The average strawberry has 200 seeds.

Strawberries are grown in every state, but California grows most (83%) of them.

The largest known strawberry ever grown was the size of an apple.





# Move...

The weather is getting nicer and after being cooped up in the house, you are probably ready to get outside. Your local park is a great place to visit and the best part is that it is FREE!



## Park Critic

1. Find a free park in your area. A good place to locate one is your phone book under the yellow pages.
2. Using your calendar, plan a day to visit it.
3. Take along a pen and paper to record your “review.” Here are some things to comment on...

•What equipment does the park have? (swing, slide, etc.)

•What was your child’s favorite thing?

•Did you see anything unsafe?

•Was there a picnic area?

4. With your child, give the park a star rating.

★ Yucky

★★ OK

★★★ Good

★★★★ GREAT!

# Step into Spring Reflections

You are the most important teacher in your child's life!



As a family, we... (circle which ones you did)

- Had strawberries for a snack
- Read The Funny Bone
- Talked about the Fun Strawberry Facts
- Did the Park Critic activity

Anything else? \_\_\_\_\_

Our favorite activity in this guide was... \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

The activity would have been better if... \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Family Names: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Stroll into Summer



## A Family Activity Guide

**Be on the LOOKout for...**

**Munch:** Yummy ideas and information about watermelons

**Move:** Fun reasons to turn off the TV and computer and move

**Laugh:** The Funny Bone—Guaranteed to make you chuckle

**Learn:** Learn new vocabulary with Words... Words... Words

Stroll into Summer: A Family Activity Guide was developed as a supplement to the Keystone Kids Go! Keystone Color Me Healthy project.





# Munch...

- Watermelons make a healthy and filling treat. They help keep your body *hydrated* and give Vitamins A and C, fiber and potassium. Potassium helps your muscles.
- Buy a watermelon with your child. Talk about how heavy it feels. Have your child predict whether or not there are seeds inside. Wash the watermelon in cold water and then cut it open. Talk about the different colors and how it smells. Don't forget to munch on some, too!

## The Funny Bone

Question: Why did the boy put a watermelon under his pillow?

Answer: He wanted to have sweet dreams

## Words... Words... Words

*Canteen*: a small container used to carry water

*Explorer*: a person who travels to discover new places and things

*Hydrated*: to keep enough water in your body

*Stroll*: a nice relaxing walk

For more information about fruits and vegetables in season, visit: [http://www.papreferred.com/seasonal\\_calendar.aspx](http://www.papreferred.com/seasonal_calendar.aspx)

## Fun Watermelon Facts

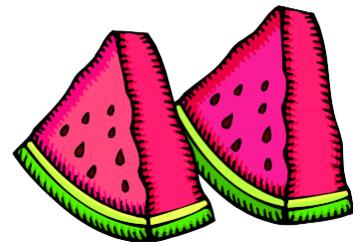
### Did you know...

Early *explorers* used watermelons as *canteens*.

Watermelons are 92% water.

Watermelons can be called a fruit, but are really a vegetable.

Every part of the watermelon can be eaten... even the rind and the seeds.





# Move...

The days are longer and warmer. Enjoy every moment of it! It is very important that you drink plenty of water and put on sunscreen frequently.



## Operation Cool-Off

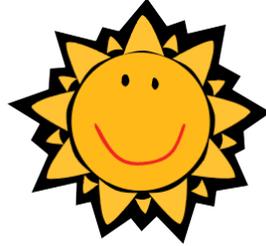
Here are some ideas for cooling off when the weather is hot.

1. Find a local pool to visit. Make sure to take along your sunscreen, floaties, and some toys.
2. Turn on the sprinkler in the back yard and run through it.
3. Take a water-filled bucket outside along with some water toys. Splash and play.

**Note... Never leave your child alone with water, even if you feel it is safe. Only visit a pool where there is a lifeguard on duty.**

# Stroll into Summer Reflections

You are the most important teacher in your child's life!



As a family, we... (circle which ones you did)

- Opened up a watermelon and ate it
- Read The Funny Bone
- Talked about the Fun Watermelon Facts
- Did Operation Cool-Off

Anything else? \_\_\_\_\_

Our favorite activity in this guide was... \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

The activity would have been better if... \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Family Names: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Fly into Fall



## A Family Activity Guide

**Be on the LOOKout for...**

**Munch:** Yummy ideas and information about apples

**Move:** Fun reasons to turn off the TV and computer and move

**Laugh:** The Funny Bone—Guaranteed to make you chuckle

**Learn:** Learn new vocabulary with Words... Words... Words

Fly into Fall: A Family Activity Guide was developed as a supplement to the Keystone Kids Go! Keystone Color Me Healthy project.





# Munch...

- Apples are at their *peak* in the fall months. They also make a healthy and filling snack. A medium size apple has only 80 calories and is fat free. Apples also are a great source of fiber which helps move food through our body.
- Share an apple with your child. Wash the apple in cold water and then cut it in half and *inspect* what you see. Look at the seed pockets and count how many seeds are there. Talk about how the apple feels, weighs, smells, and looks.

## The Funny Bone

Question: Why was the apple all alone?

Answer: Because the banana *split!*

### Words... Words... Words

*Inspect:* look closely at

*Peak:* prime, best

*Split:* another way of saying take-off or leave

*Volume:* amount

For more information about fruits and vegetables,  
visit: [www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org](http://www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org)

## Fun Apple Facts

### Did you know...

Apples are grown in all 50 states.

25% of an apple's *volume* is air. That is why they float.

Every apple has 5 seed pockets inside. The number of seeds depend on how healthy the apple tree was.

Most of the world's apples are grown in China. The United States is second.





# Move...

It won't be long until the weather gets cold. Take advantage of the nice days that are left and get outside. Fall is a season of great sights, smells, and sounds.



## Fall Scavenger Walk

Take a walk with your child outside. Talk about all the sights, smells, and sounds that you find. Take a pen and paper along to write down all the things you see. Here are some things to look for:

- The smell of leaves
- An acorn, a pinecone, a wooly caterpillar, a red leaf, a green leaf, a yellow leaf, a stick, and anything else you can think of
- The sound of “crunch” under your feet

## Other ideas...

- Rake up a pile of leaves and jump into it (A great way to work off some energy!)
- Collect different leaves and make a book

# Fly into Fall Reflections

You are the most important teacher in your child's life!



As a family, we... (circle which ones you did)

- Cut and ate an apple
- Inspected the seed pocket and counted the seeds
- Read The Funny Bone
- Talked about the Fun Apple Facts
- Went on the Fall Scavenger Hunt

Anything else? \_\_\_\_\_

Our favorite activity in this guide was... \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

The activity would have been better if... \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Family Names: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_